

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An interlabial pad comprising:

an absorbent body; and

a cover body for covering the absorbent body in an enclosing manner,

wherein the interlabial pad has an elongated shape and a substantially elliptical cross section, and has a length under use in a vertical direction that is longer than a length in a horizontal direction and

and wherein the absorbent body includes a fiber aggregate in which the fibers are oriented in random directions, the fiber aggregate including:

a first fiber aggregate located on an upper side of the interlabial pad in a vertical direction when the interlabial pad is worn by a wearer, the first fiber aggregate having a first flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a first average fiber length for being deformable upon contacting a vestibular floor of the wearer.

a second fiber aggregate located on a lower side of the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate having a second flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a second average fiber length for maintaining a shape of the second fiber aggregate for retaining absorbed body fluids, and

a third fiber aggregate located on a lower side of the second fiber aggregate and on a lower side of the interlabial pad, the third fiber aggregate having a third flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a third averaged fiber length for being deformable upon receiving an external impact,

wherein the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate are

free of any adhesive agent or pressing applied to any of the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate, and are covered by the cover body, such that ends of the cover body are affixed on the third fiber aggregate,

wherein ~~an average fiber length in~~ each of the first average fiber length aggregate and the third average fiber length aggregate is between 25 mm and 50 mm, and ~~an average fiber length in~~ the average second fiber length aggregate is between 3 mm and 4 mm,

wherein spaces between fibers in the first fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate are more flexibly varied than spaces between fibers in the second fiber aggregate, [[and]]

wherein the flexural rigidity of each of the first, second and third fiber aggregates aggregate has a flexural rigidity, is measurable as a Gurley bending resistance within a range ranging from 25 mg to 130 mg; and a ratio of flexural rigidities in two mutually orthogonal directions for each of the first, second and third fiber aggregates ranges ranging between 0.5 and 2.0, and

wherein the first and third flexural rigidities are less than the second flexural rigidity.

2. (Previously presented) The interlabial pad according to Claim 1;

wherein the flexural rigidities in two mutually orthogonal directions of the fiber aggregate are substantially the same.

3. (Currently amended) An interlabial pad comprising:

an absorbent body; and

a cover body for covering the absorbent body in an enclosing manner,

wherein the interlabial pad has an elongated shape and a substantially elliptical cross section,

and has a length under use in a vertical direction that is longer than a length in a horizontal direction and

wherein the absorbent body includes a fiber aggregate in which the fibers are oriented in random directions, the fiber aggregate including:

a first fiber aggregate located on an upper side of the interlabial pad in a vertical direction when the interlabial pad is worn by a wearer, the first fiber aggregate having a first flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a first average fiber length for being deformable upon contacting a vestibular floor of the wearer,

a second fiber aggregate located on a lower side of the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate having a second flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a second average fiber length for maintaining a shape of the second fiber aggregate for retaining absorbed body fluids, and

a third fiber aggregate located on a lower side of the second fiber aggregate and on a lower side of the interlabial pad, the third fiber aggregate having a third flexural rigidity which is controlled according to a third averaged fiber length for being deformable upon receiving an external impact,

wherein the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate are free of any adhesive agent or pressing applied to any of the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate, and are covered by the cover body, such that ends of the cover body are affixed on the third fiber aggregate,

wherein each of the first average fiber length and the third average fiber length is between 25 mm and 50 mm, and the average second fiber length is between 3 mm and 4 mm,

~~The interlabial pad according to Claim 1;~~

wherein the absorbent body is formed by layering the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate, each differing from the others in tensile elongation; and

wherein the first fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate each have a higher tensile elongation than the second fiber aggregate,

wherein spaces between fibers in the first fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate are more flexibly varied than spaces between fibers in the second fiber aggregate,

wherein the flexural rigidity of each of the first, second and third fiber aggregates, is measurable as a Gurley bending resistance within a range 25 mg to 130 mg; and a ratio of flexural rigidities in two mutually orthogonal directions for each of the first, second and third fiber aggregates ranges between 0.5 and 2.0, and

wherein the first and third flexural rigidities are less than the second flexural rigidity.

4. (Previously presented) The interlabial pad according to Claim 3,

wherein the first fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate, in a wet state in which liquids have been absorbed, each have a tensile elongation of at least 60% of a tensile elongation in a dry state.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 1;

wherein the interlabial pad is a substantially planar interlabial pad; and

wherein the cover body includes a liquid permeable surface side sheet and a liquid impermeable back face side sheet;

wherein the absorbent body is formed by layering the fiber aggregate and another fiber aggregate that differ from each other in tensile elongation; and

wherein one of the fiber aggregates which is positioned at the vestibular floor side has a higher tensile elongation than that of the other fiber aggregate which is positioned at the side opposite to the vestibular floor side.

7. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 6;

wherein a proportion of the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation and a proportion of the fiber aggregate having the lower tensile elongation are substantially the same in the thickness direction of the absorbent body.

8. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 6;

wherein a proportion of the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is larger than a proportion of the fiber aggregate having the lower tensile elongation in the thickness direction of the absorbent body at a vicinity of a longitudinal direction central line.

9. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 8,

wherein the absorbent body comprises the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation at outer peripheral parts and being disposed over the entire thickness direction.

10. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 6,

wherein the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is formed by layering solitary or mixed fibers selected from the group consisting of rayon, acetate, natural cotton, super absorbent polymer fibers and synthetic fibers; and

wherein the tensile elongation of the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is maintained at 60% or more, compared to that in the dry state even in the wet state in which liquids are absorbed.

11. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 6;

wherein a dividing region which divides the absorbent body is provided at least substantially along the longitudinal direction central line at a rear of the absorbent body.

12. (Previously presented) The interlabial pad according to Claim 2;

wherein the absorbent body is formed by layering the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate, and wherein each of the first fiber aggregate, the second fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate from each other in tensile elongation; and

wherein the first fiber aggregate and the third fiber aggregate each have a higher tensile elongation than that of the second fiber aggregate.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 2;

wherein the tensile elongation of the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is maintained at 60% or more than that in the dry state even in the wet state in which liquids are absorbed.

17. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 9,

wherein the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is formed by layering solitary or mixed fibers selected from the group consisting of rayon, acetate, natural cotton, super absorbent polymer fibers and synthetic fibers; and

wherein the tensile elongation of the fiber aggregate having the higher tensile elongation is maintained at 60% or more than that in the dry state even in the wet state in which liquids are absorbed.

18. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 7;

wherein a dividing region which divides the absorbent body is provided at least substantially along the longitudinal direction central line at a rear of the absorbent body.

19. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 8;

wherein a dividing region which divides the absorbent body is provided at least substantially along the longitudinal direction central line at a rear of the absorbent body.

20. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 9;

wherein a dividing region which divides the absorbent body is provided at least substantially along the longitudinal direction central line at a rear of the absorbent body.

21. (Withdrawn) The interlabial pad according to Claim 10;

wherein a dividing region which divides the absorbent body is provided at least substantially along the longitudinal direction central line at a rear of the absorbent body.

22., 23 (Canceled).